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ABSTRACT

A year-long holistic study of literary responses was conducted to determine the effects of using a transactive literary paradigm in secondary school English classrooms. (The transactive--for transactional--paradigm emphasizes the reader's involvement with a text and the reader's use of personal experiences to extract meaning from texts.) Participants in the study were four teachers and their tenth grade students. The 93 students in four of the classes were taught within a curriculum applying transactive theory to classroom practices (nondirective teaching strategies involving public conversation, private conversation, and free association), while another 98 students in four other classes received traditional literary instruction. Observations and teacher self-reports revealed changes in questioning patterns, teachers' responses to responses, and teachers' acceptance of personal responses to texts. Measures of students' changes in reading achievement, attitude toward literature, and cognitive maturity revealed the following: (1) no significant differences in reading achievement between experimental and control groups, (2) significantly improved attitudes toward literature by students in the experimental classes, (3) and no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in cognitive maturity. (RL)

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Introducing the Transactive Paradigm for Literary Response Into the High School Literature Program: A Study of the Effects on Curriculum, Teachers, and Students

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Introducing the Transactive Paradigm for Literary Response Into the High School Literature Program: A Study of the Effects on Curriculum, Teachers, and Students

Introduction to the Problem

When the study of literature is explained and defended, the explanations are often a cacophany of trivialities, realities, and promises. Classroom teachers of English literature are not confused by the noise; they agree that the most important reasons for teaching literature are: (1) to develop self-understanding; (2) to develop critical faculties and (3) to develop ability to use language (Purves, 1972, p. 306).

This agreement on the question of why literature is studied in schools does not imply agreement on what we teach or how we teach it. There is a recurrent dichotomy in literature education: life experience vs. academic discipline, affective vs. cognitive, humanistic vs. behavioristic, and, more recently, subjective vs. objective. Controversies and factions emerge and then fade away. Classroom teachers' concern for the humanistic or personal value of literature is closely bound to their commitment to foster growth in intellectual development and general language ability. Although classroom teachers find the personal value of literature to be the most interesting and significant aspect of their work (Mellon, 1975), they rarely elaborate on this in public presentations of curriculum or in

rationales for their programs.

Unfortunately, the personal values of literature become subordinated to the more easily located and tested cognitive outcomes of instruction. Neither the schools nor the universities are very helpful to teachers in their attempts to attend to the humanistic and personal value of literature, to attend to the insights into the self which are possible when thoughtful reading transforms texts into literature. The schools encourage objective and impartial testing and grading. This, in turn, affects curriculum and pedagogy. The teachers' own education in literature and literary theory concentrated on the ideal, informed reader, a cultured intellectual who strives for detachment, objectivity, and aesthetic distance. The candid high school reader is obviously not the ideal reader. The potentially helpful research in response to literature--Holland (1973, 1975a, 1975c, 1977), Bleich, (1975, 1978), and Rosenblatt (1968, 1978)--has not been communicated to large numbers of classroom teachers.

The Transactive Paradigm

Holland's (1973, 1975a, 1975b) transactive theory of literary response is a comprehensive literary theory based on contemporary ego psychology. It encompasses the writer, the reader, and the text. Although a single reader's response to literature cannot be predicted, the activity of the reader is a lawful process, a transaction between the text and personality organization or identity of the reader. The case studies of student responses which document Holland's paradigm are persuasive evidence of readers' defending, expecting, fantasizing, and

transforming the words on the page into moral, intellectual, social, or aesthetic unity (1975b). The reader is viewed as an active creator of meaning.

In Holland's paradigm for response to literature, the activities of the reader are traced as the reader transforms the perception of print into meaning. The reader is engaged in balancing the demands of inner reality--maintaining a continuing sense of his own identity--with the demand of the outer reality of the text. Holland says that the reader selectively perceives the text, attending to some things and not to others, defending against displeasure. Drawing upon past literary experience and other analogous experiences, the reader fantasizes unconsciously, gaining pleasure from the experience. This activity is transformed into a meaning, which is usually attributed to the words of the text. But, in Holland's paradigm, the reader generates the meaning of the text, using the words the text makes available to him in a manner consistent with the reader's individual identity. In this model of response, what readers say about texts reveals their habitual ways of experiencing themselves and the world. In Holland, the final effects of student reading literature are an awareness of what is in and around the text which interacts with the reader.

Other literary response theorists (Richards, 1929; Lesser, 1957; Favat, 1974, 1977) have also acknowledged that both literature itself and responses to literature have dimensions best explained by psychology. This acknowledgement is usually accompanied by cautions not to reduce art to psychology or the dangers of viewing student readers as patients in need of therapy.

There is a risk of invading students' privacy, of incurring community or administrative censure, and of conflicting with more general school goals. I have found that these surface objections mask deeper misgivings about literature and psychology. Teachers state that they are inadequately prepared to interpret and to judge responses that are personal; they become anxious that emotional responses will be unmanageable and undermine classroom order; they have little confidence that they can direct personal responses into critical, interpreting and evaluative responses.

Questions of This Study

This study is a tentative probe into assessing the potential of the transactive paradigm as an appropriate and useful theoretic basis for informing the teaching of literature in public high school classrooms. In a year-long collaboration with four Grade 10 English teachers in a suburban high school, we developed curriculum intended to encourage students to engage in transactions with texts and to articulate the meanings they created in the transactions.

As I shall explain in the design portion of this report, the day-to-day activities of instruction of an experimental group and a monitoring group addressed one major question: Is the transactive paradigm an appropriate or useful model for secondary school study of literature?" Since the study took place amid the on-going program of the school, other questions had to be addressed as well. What effects would the experimental program have on the school's curriculum, on the teachers, and on the students?

I report the effects on the curriculum and on the teachers in my field notes and classroom observations and in teacher self-reports. The effects on students are reported in the statistical results of testing. The areas of testing--reading, attitude, and cognitive maturity--answer potential objections to personal response instruction on the grounds that it encourages inaccurate reading, fosters poor attitudes toward literature, or encourages regressive egocentric thinking.

Hypotheses for Student Testing

The following are the hypotheses for the testing portion of this study.

1. Students in the experimental group will perform as well or better than students in the monitoring group on tests of reading comprehension and interpretation.

2. Students in the experimental group will show positive change in attitude toward literature equal to or better than the students in the monitoring group.

3. Students in the experimental group will show growth in cognitive maturity equal to or better than the students in the monitoring group.

It is important, too, to state what this study did not intend to accomplish. This study does not purport to be a test of the truth of the transactive paradigm. Nor is it the important research which remains to be done on the transactive paradigm: the careful investigation of the conscious-unconscious strategies of formulating meaning (Purves and Holland, 1974).

This study addresses the problems of eliciting transactive responses in classrooms. Once it is known what observable

differences may possibly exist between transactive classrooms and other classrooms, it may be possible to design studies which elaborate and possibly quantify the differences.

Psychology and Literature
Interactive and Transactive Paradigm

The research review I present here is a selection of studies based on two different paradigms of response; a) an interactive paradigm and b) a transactive paradigm. Both the paradigms themselves and the research based on these paradigms have psychological and literary dimensions. In the interactive paradigm, responses to literature are used to understand the personalities of the readers; in the transactive paradigm, the personalities of the readers are examined to understand their responses to literature.

Interactive Paradigm

The interactive paradigm of response to literature postulated that involvement with literature is an activity which promotes psychological growth and clarification of thinking. The reader experiences literary forms within a framework of psychological

predispositions which affect the choices or preferences for certain texts and affect the ways in which readers order ideas. (Murray, 1936, 1938)

Extensions of the interactive paradigm (Wilson, 1956) identified the projective quality of responses to stories--the fact that responses to literature revealed the personality organization of the reader. Bibliotherapy research (Shrodes, 1949) verified the projective quality of responses and developed the uses of literary response to monitor therapeutic progress. Research in clinics (Gardner, 1971), libraries (Tews, 1962; Beatty, 1962), and classrooms (Taba, 1955; Elkins, 1966; Zucaro, 1972; Chaffee, 1975; Penna, 1976; Gallegher, 1978; Russell, 1970; and Lewis, 1970) schematized the psychological growth patterns and measured changes over time which occurred in individual readers and in groups of readers.

Transactive Paradigm

The transactive paradigm of response to literature examines both personality and text. The psychological predispositions of the reader noted in the interactive model are clearly delineated in the transactive model. The personality organization of the reader is articulated in a statement of the reader's identity theme: "An individual's characteristic way of dealing with the demands of outer and inner reality." (Holland, 1975a, p. 8)

Unlike the interactional paradigm, in Holland, the transactive paradigm specifically names the psychological activities of the reader while transforming print into meaning. In balancing the demands of inner reality--maintaining a sense of identity--with the demands of the outer reality of the text, the

reader defends, expects, fantasizes, and transforms the text into meaning. In the college classrooms where transactive responses have been articulated, the self-knowledge sought is not a psychoanalysis of the individual reader but an increasing awareness on the part of each reader of his or her own response patterns. (Holland and Schwartz, 1975; Holland, 1977)

The transactive relationship between reader and text is the focus of other literary theory, (Fish, 1970; Leitch, 1977; Bleich, 1975, 1978) Rosenblatt's (1968, 1978) transactional theory of the literary work differs from Holland's transactive paradigm in its rejection of the framework of psychoanalytic psychology and in stating the constraining qualities of the text. In Rosenblatt, the text is a stimulus and guide evoking the poem in the reader; in Holland, the text is a record of the literary work acted upon by the reader. Rosenblatt's transactional theory acknowledges the unique activity of the reader in the creation of a poem out of a text, but she directs attention to literary interpretation and criticism rather than to statements about the reader or the reader's personality organization.

Applebee (1978) accepts Holland's concept of readers reconstructing texts; however, like Rosenblatt, he prefers to stress the importance of the text. From the framework of developmental psychology, Applebee notes that descriptions of subjective, personal responses are descriptions of "the product of the interaction of the work with our own particular representation of experience." (p. 125)

Applebee, unlike Holland, maintains the difference between

subjective and objective responses:

> As readers begin to analyze their subjective, personal responses, they also become aware of the distinction between their subjective and objective reactions, tending to formulate the former as identification or involvement; they also tend to begin to look for reasons for their subjective reactions in the objective characteristics of the work. (p. 125)

Of importance for this study is Applebee's identification of a transitional tendency emerging in young adolescents in the first stages of formal operational thought. Subjective and objective responses are mixed in a tendency to state meanings of texts as analogies or exemplification in which "the work is treated as illustrating a much wider class of life experiences." (p. 125)

To summarize, the transactive paradigm has been developed to the point of acceptance by literary theorists that the reader is, indeed, engaged in an interior transaction with a particular text. In this transaction, the reader reconstructs the text and this reconstruction is evident in the reader's responses to the text. Transactive responses, at least the first, spontaneous responses, are personal and subjective (Beach, 1973). Subsequent responses may be built upon this first, spontaneous response. (Beach, 1973; Silky and Purves, 1973; Bleich, 1978)

Since most of the instructional development of the paradigm has taken place in college classrooms, this study examines the literature instruction which may be designed by high school

teachers who are made aware of the transactive paradigm.

Design and Procedures

This study of one year's instruction in literature from a specific paradigm employs holist methodology. (Diesing, 1972) This form of research does not assume that all the variables affecting the study are known beforehand or that all variables can be controlled. Like many curriculum or instruction studies in education, it is the orderly, rational, and documented introduction of change into a school's classroom instruction and the close observation of the effects of that change. Further, this study is a collaboration between a participant-observer researcher and classroom teachers. (Taba 1950, 1955; Elkins, 1966; Webb, in press)

The Setting

The population of Amherst, New York, is middle-class with an upper-range of professional people and business executives. The community is a stable one; most of the students in the high school entered the district in early elementary years. The general atmosphere of the high school building is one of quiet and efficient management.

Changes are introduced slowly, accepted and familiar teaching practices are encouraged. The English Department relies on outside testing such as the New York State Regents Examination, PSAT, and CEEB tests to verify the effectiveness of the English instruction.

The Teachers

The four teachers who collaborated in this study were each tenured with a minimum of ten years' experience and at least 30

hours of education at the masters' level. One had a specialty in reading, and one had an advanced graduate education in curriculum and psychology.

In this study, the teachers continued their usual functions in the school. They made their own literature selections, planned classroom activities suitable for their students and the works read, determined the ways in which responses to works would be articulated, and evaluated and graded student performances.

In the experimental classes, as well as the monitoring classes, the teachers controlled the timing of the experimental instruction, the frequency of the suggested instructional strategies, and were asked to report follow-up or continuing instruction they thought appropriate.

My observations of the classroom teachers were recorded in a weekly summary report which I composed and distributed to the teachers for discussion and revision. This weekly field record contained reports of lessons or units in transactive response composed by each of the teachers, the observed successes or failures, the intended development of the lessons, and comparison with the usual instruction in the monitoring classes. I replied to the lessons with theoretic statements, suggestions for alternatives to correct problems or to develop lessons, and insights I was gaining into both the usual instruction and the experimental instruction. (See appendix).

Three of the teachers collaborated fully for the entire school year. One teacher engaged in lively debate with me about the value of the experimental instruction but never actually

tried any of the suggested instruction.

The Existing Curriculum

The curriculum plan for Grade 10 English described the contents of each elective, but presented no indication of the ways in which literature was presented to students, the ways they were asked to respond, or the ways they were tested. The elective program had been in existence for five years. Twelve choices included genre (novel, drama), themes (Native Americans) and a Shakespeare course. Generally, the time patterns of the school allowed two and a half periods of literature instruction each week.

The Experimental Curriculum

The teachers agreed to use one or more of three experimental strategies intended to assist students to articulate transactions with texts. The strategies are:

Public Conversation, an informal, non-directive dialogue between the teacher and a single student. (Webb, in press)

Private Conversation, a conversation loosely structured by a guide sheet (see appendix) which takes place between pairs of students.

Free Association, two storytelling techniques (Shiflett, 1973; Schultz, 1978) used as a means of gathering a pool of individual memories and associations.

Students in the Experimental and Monitoring Groups

This is a study of intact groups rather than a pre-selected population. Before school opened, the teachers chose two time periods of the day in which all teachers taught classes; and they identified those students as the study population. During the

year, the students were regrouped each quarter according to their elective choices. The study population was very similar to the total Grade 10 class in distribution among the five I.Q. levels. Within the study population, the experimental and monitoring groups had different numbers of students in each I.Q. level. There were 98 in the experimental group and 93 in the monitoring group.

The comparisons to be made between the experimental and monitoring groups, then, are not made in a population randomly assigned to treatment and control groups; comparisons are made between two intact groups created in the usual manner of scheduling in that school.

Tests of Effects on Students

Reading Achievement: Comprehension and Interpretation, Post-Test Only. Developed by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, the psychometric properties of four short stories and objective test questions are reported in Literature Education in Ten Countries (Purves, 1973). Averaged reliability was .72 for comprehension, .74 for interpretation, and .84 for combined score. The procedure for the administration of tests followed closely those of the IEA study.

Attitude Questionnaire: Transfer and Interest, Pre- and Post-Test. Developed by IEA and reported by Purves (1973), the reliability is .67 for transfer and .68 for interest. Administration and scoring followed the procedures of the IEA study.

Cognitive Maturity: The Role-Taking Task, Pre- and Post Test

The Role-Taking Task (RTT) is a projective storytelling task adapted (Feffer, 1959) from Piaget's (1950) tasks for egocentric thought. In this study, TAT plates 2 and 8 BM provided the stimulus for both

pre-test and post-test. A random sample of 60 protocols were typed and re-arranged for scoring. (Peffer and Schnell, 1960). At the end of the study, three independent judges scored each protocol. The scores for both stories were averaged for a single pre-test score and a single post-test score. Pearson Product Moment Correlation of raw scores for each of the four test stories were significant, ranging from $<.001$ to $<.05$.

Results

Effects of Curriculum

1. No changes in elective course content was necessary to accomodate the experimental instruction.
2. Public Conversations and Private Conversations replaced question-answer recitations.
3. Free Association strategies were used only occasionaly in the experimental classes.
4. Writing tasks in the experimental classes included a wider range of rhetorical modes than the monitoring classes questions. In the existing curriculum, writing tasks followed the test question form of the New York State Comprehensive Examination in English which was administered in Grade 11.

Effects on Teachers

In case studies, self-reports, and reports of classroom observations, the following effects are evident:

1. The experimental response strategies and classroom activities created by the teachers entailed risk-taking and caused anxiety during the first semester of the project. They tended to abandon the experimental instruction as the grading time for each quarter approached.

2. In the second semester, after the teachers had made numerous informal comparisons of the progress of their monitoring and experimental students, three of the teachers created instruction markedly different from the existing instruction. The fourth teacher introduced some changes in questioning patterns but judged the idea of transactive response to be too "odd" and in conflict with teaching the "facts."
3. Two of the teachers continued transactive instruction in the next year. Further, they reported on their new instruction at a professional conference.

I observed the following effects on the teachers:

1. The language of ego psychology is too closely associated with therapy for the teachers to accept it and use it in discussing classroom activities and student responses.
2. The teachers modified their opinion that the appropriate time for personal response is limited to pre-reading activities. Expression of personal response was no longer viewed as a digression in oral response; however, in written response, they expected personal responses to be clearly and logically connected to the task assigned.
3. The unique quality of transactive response was accepted. Although differences in interpretation were sometimes viewed as problems in comprehension, these "errors" were briefly corrected. Otherwise, differences in responses became a source of interest and exploration rather than right or wrong answers to direct questions.
4. The teachers developed confidence and fluency in non-directive questioning strategies. Summarizing and reflecting replaced acceptance or rejection of responses.

Effects on Students

Reading Achievement. There was no significant difference between the students in the monitoring group and those in the experimental group in reading achievement. Differences in scores in both groups were attributable to differences in intelligence as measured by the Differential Aptitude Test $F(2;190)=20.02$ $P < .001$.

Attitude. There was a significant difference between the monitoring and experimental groups in attitude $F(1;189)=5.76$ $p < .05$. The transfer sub-score is significant $F(2;181)=6.04$ $p < .01$.

Cognitive Maturity. There were no significant differences between monitoring and experimental groups. As measured by this instrument, less than half (26) of the 60 students entered Grade 10 at formal operational thinking level. About one third (18) students moved into formal operational thinking during the year.

The testing located one possible effect of transactive instruction--improving students' attitudes toward literature, particularly the transfer to their own lives. This desirable effect was achieved without losses in reading achievement and without regression to egocentric thinking patterns.

Discussion

The transactive paradigm did prove to be a useful and appropriate model for secondary school study of literature. The transactive paradigm, with its explanation of what readers do to create meanings, can provide a rationale for curriculum and instruction. When called upon to explain the study of literature to others, we may draw upon the findings of ego psychology, cognitive psychology, and aesthetics. And then we can develop instruction which does not tell readers what literature means but which permits readers

to explore their own ways of creating meanings.

At the onset of the study, the teachers agreed to focus their attention on the ways individual students respond to texts. They agreed to try three strategies for eliciting the spontaneous responses immediately after reading. As the teachers planned the transactive instruction in the experimental classes, the study developed into an observation of change: changes in the ways of thinking about student responses and changes in the ways readers talked and wrote about literature.

The Public Conversations and subsequent development of student responses permitted those students still in transition to formal operational thinking to respond to texts in their preferred modes. The emerging cognitive abilities of understanding through analogy is necessarily a mixture of subjective and objective responses. Once the reader has managed to communicate the response in a mixture of personal anecdote, memories, and feelings as well as statements about the text, general statements of interpretation and evaluation are possible.

This transitional phase of intellectual development may fade as more mature structures of thought emerge later; however, the transactive responses of older readers indicate that analogizing continues to occur. (Holland, 1975a, Lesser, 1957)

I am convinced that the language development and intellectual growth to be developed in high school literature classrooms ought to focus on enhancing this stage specific cognitive ability. Rather than rushing the reader past the necessary interior activity of making personal transactions with texts, the instruction time should be spent in making these transactions known to the reader and

compared with the transactions of other readers.

As I said earlier, classroom teachers place the humanistic value of self-understanding first among their reasons for teaching literature but they wanted this self-understanding directed toward language and intellectual development. The testing results of this study indicate that students who spent time exploring their individual transactions with texts did continue to grow in reading ability and in general cognitive development.

As I indicated in the contrast between an interactive paradigm and a transactive paradigm, both psychology and literary study have looked to literature as a source of self-understanding. Literature classrooms are among the few places in educational institutions where students can be asked to be self-reflective and self-observing. The rest of education of students concentrates on efferent reading (Rosenblatt, 1978), reading for information or content. Only in literature classrooms are students asked to do aesthetic reading where "the reader's attention is centered on what he is living through during his relationship with that particular text." (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 25)

In the transactive instruction in this study, the teachers acknowledged and reflected back to the student the expressed feelings, associations, and meanings. This process of elaborating and exploring the students' responses rather than telling them what the literature means confirms the readers' experience of the text. If Favat (1974) and Bettleheim (1978) are correct in their understanding of literary reading, the reader continues with the projection-catharsis-insight movement of reading with a sense of understanding and a sense of having been understood.

In the comparisons and contrasts of many, very different responses to literature, it is possible for readers to see themselves as both unique persons with private meanings for texts and as social persons with shared meanings. In the language of the transactive paradigm, readers' responses confirm their own identities and enable them to make sense of themselves in the world. In this way, literature "serves to restore the person to himself so that he may know who he really is. Then the great writers will speak to him and reach him, for he trusts the self he brings to them," (Shrodes, 1949, p. 327).

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Appendix A

Private Conversation Guide

This guide sheet is to be filled out by the listener in a private conversation pair and given to the talker at the end of the conversation.

Listender's Name_____

Talker's Name _____

Work Discussed _____

In your conversation did the talker do each of the following:

	Did Do	Didn't Do
1. Choose a topic to talk about?	_____	_____
2. Refer to parts of the story or to words in the story?	_____	_____
3. Refer to personal experience?	_____	_____
4. Make sense?	_____	_____
5. Have an interesting response to the story?	_____	_____

Complete each of the following sentences:

1. (Sum up the talker's response) I hear you say_____

_____

2. (Give a different interpretation to one part of the work or disagree with some part of the talker's response) I found this part of the work different from the way you say it_____

_____

3. The most interesting statement you made or the one I would like to hear more about was_____

_____

Appendix B

Selected Entries from Weekly Summary Reports

October 6

Alice. Alice found the Public Conversation strategy to be uncomfortable and phoney. In a one-legged conversation in the hall, Alice said that assigning a role to play for the student talker and for herself would make the strategy more comfortable. "Too early in the year," Alice planned her class on Tea and Sympathy around the idea of a debate.

Carol. Carol tried the Public Conversation with half the class. She recommends this smaller group for this strategy. The novel under consideration was When the Legends Die. The students were asked to focus on the character of Tom. Carol had prepared five questions she wanted the students to explore and provided the listening students with a sheet for their responses with the following heading:

> As the interview progresses, write comments that you wish could be added or write differences in your understanding of the book. Try to write them in the order of the questions that appear in this interview.

October 23

Donna. Donna made the following observations about some things that go on in a Public Conversation:

1. The kids use social language to discuss "school" topics. Donna found that they had experience in writing about literature but little in talking about literature.

2. The talkers tend to have a one-sentence recitation piece prepared and needed assistance to explore the possibilities of expanding the short response.

3. The talkers had their ideas confirmed and modified by the response of the listeners.

4. The dialog format of the interview allows a period of time to search for the response, a period of time that is not silence but an exploration of the topic.

Carol. Carol used a variation of the Public Conversation in which students may interpret by composing questions. The monitoring class will be working on plot summary, similarities between novels, and Indian culture. The experimental group will do the same tasks in addition to the Public Conversations.

November 12.

Alice. Alice and I continued our conversation about film responses. What she objects to is the unsupported report of the effect of the film. We argued about what constituted the "facts" of a film and talked less heatedly about selective perception. I think we stated the differences between her view of film and my view of film.

January 14.

Carol. Carol's group saw the video tape production of The Taming of the Shrew. She made up a test with questions for transactive responses and gave them to her experimental group and another class. She compared the groups' performance. The transactive class's work was, in her judgment, generally better. The first difference was the reaction to the assignments. The transactive group had less difficulties understanding the tasks assigned; more questions and doubts about the tasks were evident in the other group. Few students in either group chose the fantasy questions. Here's a quote: "I'm delighted with these questions, not because they work so well but because they are fresh. Letting students construct their own meanings from literature

doesn't have to be a formless 'How do you feel about that'?" Both Carol and I found composing the transactive questions took more time and work. Maybe after you've had years of practice, it gets to be as easy as the old questions. In the meantime, I'm looking for simpler suggestions. In the Public Conversations, I keep asking very simple questions and they keep giving me back very complex answers.

February 11.

Agnes. Since this is the half-way point in my study and we've decided to continue for another semester, I'm reconsidering the project. As I see it today, the model I suggest shifts the emphasis from the text to the student and, so far, shifts the emphasis from group oral discussions to individual extended dialog. There is a shift I did not realize earlier, a shift from the expository essay to other modes of written discourse. The transactive model of response seems to be acceptable and usable early in the response process in classrooms but is less acceptable the closer the classroom comes to the evaluation process. The measures of this study are very removed from the direct short-term goals of the classroom.

March 11.

Betty. Betty and I spent most of our time talking about a situation which develops easily when students make personal responses. In a class, one student identified strongly with Wolf Larsen in The Sea Wolf. As that student expanded his interpretation of the captain, the other students defined their interpretations in contrast to his. The atmosphere was not hostile but strong feeling was present. In the interaction, the first young man was left alone in his empathy with the captain and the rest seemed to group together against the captain's way of seeing the world. Betty was concerned about the effects this "ganging up" might have on the dissident reader.

Donna. Donna's been thinking over the last semester. She likes this emphasis on individual response very much. She made one important observation that students are able to work subjectively without "mixing up the truth." They move from interpretive modes to more text-centered questions without confusion. She's planning more dialog writing and more fantasy writing.

Carol. Carol's off into working with responses to several works in one Public Conversation. She finds the time exploring individual response is more than made up in getting the students into the next work. "Zaps them into it."

March 25.

Donna. Students are writing dialogs and essays in response to Rocky and Eye of the Storm. A quote. "I am increasingly impressed with how different their responses are. The Outsiders is, I know, a well-constructed, solidly developed novel. Being who I am, at the age I am, I am not "gripped" by it. They are! They say they just can't put it down. I'm enjoying the public conversations because we get off the track into related areas and into their perceptions of what's going on. Today we got off into the topic of fighting and wandered into kinds of verbal fighting."

"The contrast is even more evident because the monitoring group is progressing in the standard way. They are reading Night, a story of a survivor of Hitler's concentration camps. The material is filled with triggers for personal reaction and some burst through the restraints, but I feel constrained by the format in the monitoring class. ...Period 1 deserves the best, too."

Betty. Betty is changing essay forms to more informal essays. She discovered a well-written personal empathy with Hump in The Sea Wolf. A student

wrote of Hump's loneliness since he was cut off from all familiar activity and had no one he could talk with. Betty said that formerly she might have commented on the personal portion as an error in unity in the essay, but now she commented on that portion separately as evidence that the reader was in contact with the book.

April and May.

April was the end of a quarter, Easter holidays, regrouping for the last quarter of the year, and the beginning of preparation for final examinations. In May, we did the post-testing and my reports to the teachers were early returns on the scoring.